

תשעה באב
TISHA B'AV SERVICE

9 Av 5781
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Via ZOOM

TEMPLE MICAH
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INTRODUCTION (2021)

[#1A] Welcome to Temple Micah's annual service to observe Tisha B'Av--the 9th Day of the Hebrew month of Av, the saddest date on the Jewish calendar, a day of infamy for the Jews down through history.

For millennia traditional Jews have observed Tisha B'Av to commemorate the date of the destruction of the First Temple in Jerusalem in 586 BCE and the Second Temple in 70 CE, both accompanied by Jewish exile. But Jews have suffered one adversity after another through the ages, some coincidental with that same date: the medieval Crusades, the 1492 expulsion from Spain, Russian pogroms in the late 19th-early 20th Century and the Holocaust, which some of us remember personally.

[#1B] We hold our Tisha B'Av service to memorialize the whole range of hardships suffered by Jews throughout history. We seek to discover what they taught us and how we emerged with new life and hope. At our temple, we sit close to the floor in a circle at the back of the sanctuary, our service lit by flickering candles as we read and chant the Biblical Book of Lamentations.

Then, last year, the Pandemic changed everything. Our lives went on hold, the country and economy came to a halt. No more in-person gathering. No communal singing, praying or breaking bread. We were isolated in our own personal space, interacting with each through Zoom's little boxes.

So, we went virtual. And, as in other tragedies down through the ages, we took advantage of this technology to augment the service with new audio and video materials that deepen and enhance our spiritual experience.

[#1C] Like our ancestors in exile who wept to return to their temple, we yearn to return in person to our sanctuary. But as we sit apart tonight, we are also mindful of their resilience and adaptability to take advantage of circumstances, and above all, their eternal hope.

--After the destruction of the first Temple, the Judahites used the Babylonian exile to learn urban ways, international commerce,

[#2A] modernity, and returned home to become a new player in the ancient Mediterranean world.

--The destruction of the second Temple, spurred their transformation from a sacrificial Temple cult to universally applicable synagogue-based worship centered on learning.

--The expulsion from Spain brought Jews to the New World and Russian pogroms in the late 19th and early 20th Century initiated their mass migration to America.

--And out of the Holocaust, came the establishment of the modern State of Israel.

So, where will we be, what will we do, how much will we have learned and how will we have changed once the Covid 19 pandemic is finally over?

[#2B] Tonight, although we sit apart in isolation, let us join together and use this commemoration of past--and present--troubles to recover our innate optimism, employ our ingenuity and resourcefulness, and exercise our historic resilience to emerge from our current adversity more innovative and determined--more open, thoughtful and caring. Together we have hope.

It is Saturday evening tonight when we traditionally do havdallah. Because Tisha B'Av is a traditional fast day, our Havdallah ceremony is abbreviated--perhaps appropriately since we are not doing this in person--by omitting the drinking of wine and the smelling of fragrant spices. So we will now just light the Havdallah candle and recite the 2 Havdallah prayers:

Blessing over the Havdalah Candle

Baruch Atah Adonai, Elohaynu Melech Haolam,
boreh mi'oray ha'esh.

ברוך אתה, יי אלהינו, מלך העולם.
בורא מאורי האש

*Blessed are You, Adonai our God,
Ruler of the Universe, Creator of the lights of fire.*

Blessing of Havdalah

Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu melech haolam,
hamavdil bein kodesh l'hol, bein or l'hoshech, bein
yom hashvi'l l'sheishet yamei hama'aseh.

ברוך אתה, יי אלהינו, מלך העולם.
המבדיל בין קדש לחול, בין אור לחשך,
בין יום השביעי לששת ימי המעשה

Baruch ata Adonai, hamavdil bein kodesh l'hol.

ברוך אתה, יי המבדיל בין קדש לחול

*Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe,
Who distinguishes between sacred and ordinary, between light and darkness,
between the seventh day and the six days of creation.
Blessed are You, Adonai, Who distinguishes between sacred and ordinary.*

BAR'CHU et Adonai ham'vorach!
Baruch Adonai ham'vorach
P'olam va-ed!

בְּרַכּוּ אֶת יְיָ הַמְּבָרָךְ!
בָּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְּבָרָךְ
לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד!

PRAISE ADONAI to whom praise is due forever!
Praised be Adonai to whom praise is due,
now and forever!

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד!

Sh'ma Yisrael, Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai Echad!

Hear, O Israel, Adonai is our God, Adonai is One!

בָּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

Baruch shem k'vod malchuto l'olam va-ed.

Blessed is God's glorious majesty forever and ever.

V'AHAVTA et Adonai Elohecha,
b'chol l'vav'cha uv'chol nafsh'cha uv'chol
m'odecha. V'hayu bad'varim ha-eileh
asher anochi m'tzav'cha hayom al
l'vavecha. V'shinantam l'vanecha v'dibarta
bam b'shivt'cha b'veitecha uv'lecht'cha
vaderech uv'shochb'cha uv'kumecha.
Uk'shartam l'or al yadecha v'hayu
l'notafot bein einecha. Uch'evtam
al m'zuzot beitecha uvish'arecha.

Umaan tizk'ru vaasitem et
kol mitzvotai vih'yitem k'dosbim
l'Eloheichem. Ani Adonai Eloheichem,
asher hotzeiti et-chem mei-erec
Mitzyayim lih'yot lachem l'Elohim
ani Adonai Eloheichem.

וְאָהַבְתָּ אֶת יְיָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ
בְּכָל-לִבְבְּךָ וּבְכָל-נַפְשְׁךָ וּבְכָל-
מְאֹדְךָ: וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה
אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוְךָ הַיּוֹם עַל-
לִבְבְּךָ: וְשָׁנַנְתָּם לְבָנֶיךָ וְדַבַּרְתָּ
בָּם בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ בְּבֵיתְךָ וּבְלֶכְתְּךָ
בְּדַרְךָ: וּבְשֹׁכְבְּךָ וּבְקוּמְךָ:
וְקִשַּׁרְתָּם לְאָזְנוֹת עַל-יְדֶיךָ וְהָיוּ
לְטִטְפוֹת בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ: וְקִתְּבָתָם
עַל-מְזוֹזוֹת בֵּיתְךָ וּבְשַׁעְרֶיךָ:

לִמְעַן תִּזְכְּרוּ וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֶת-
כָּל-מִצְוֹתַי וְהָיִיתֶם קְדוֹשִׁים
לְאֱלֹהֵיכֶם: אֲנִי יְיָ אֱלֹהֵיכֶם
אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ
מִצְרָיִם לַהֲיוֹת לְכֶם לְאֱלֹהִים
אֲנִי יְיָ אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

[Silent Tefilah/Meditation]

יִתְגַּדַּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא בְּעֵלְמָא דִּי־בְרָא כְרַעוּתָהּ,
וְיִמְלִיךְ מַלְכוּתָהּ בְּחַיֵּיכוֹן וּבְיוֹמֵיכוֹן וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל־בֵּית
יִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּעֵגְלָא וּבְזִמְן קָרִיב, וְאָמְרוּ: אָמֵן.

Yit-ga-dal v'yit-ka-dash sh'mei ra-ba b'al-ma di-v'ra chi-r'u'tei, v'yam-lich mal-chu-tei b'cha-yei-chon u-v'yo-mei-chon u-v'cha-yei d'chol beit Yis-ra-eil, ba-a-ga-la u-vi-z'man ka-riv, v'i-m' ru: A-mein.

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעֵלָם וּלְעֵלְמֵי עֵלְמַיָּא.

Y'hei sh'mei ra-ba m'va-rach l'a-lam u-l'al-mei al-ma-ya.

יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח, וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמַם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא, וְיִתְהַדָּר
וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלַּל שְׁמֵהּ דְקוּדְשָׁא, בְּרִיךְ הוּא,

Yit-ba-rach v'yish-ta-bach, v'yit-pa-ar v'yit-ro-mam v'yit-na-sei, v'yit-ha-dar v'yit-a-leh v'yit-ha-lal sh'mei d'kud-sha, b'rich hu,

לְעֵלָא מִן־כָּל־בְּרַחְתָּא וְשִׁירְתָּא, תִּשְׁבַּחְתָּא וְנִחַמְתָּא
דְּאִמְרָן בְּעֵלְמָא, וְאָמְרוּ: אָמֵן.

l'ei-la min kol bir-cha-ta v'shi-ra-ta, tush-b'cha-ta v'neh-cheh-ma-ta da-a-mi-ran b'al-ma, v'i-m' ru: A-mein.

יְהֵא שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן־שְׁמַיָּא וְחַיִּים עָלֵינוּ וְעַל־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל,
וְאָמְרוּ: אָמֵן.

Y'hei sh'la-ma ra-ba min sh'ma-ya v'cha-yim, a-lei-nu v'al kol Yis-ra-el, v'im-ru: A-mein.

עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרוֹמָיו, הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל
כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְאָמְרוּ: אָמֵן.

O-seh sha-lom bi-m'ro-mav, hu ya-a-seh sha-lom a-lei-nu v'al kol Yis-ra-eil, v'i-m-'u: A-mein.

May the Source of peace send peace to all who mourn and comfort to all who are bereaved, and let us say "Amen".

SERVICE FOR THE READING OF LAMENTATIONS

Preface

Overview of Book: The *Book of Lamentations*, or *Aycha*, has five chapters, each a poem describing some aspect of the destruction of Jerusalem, the siege that preceded it, or the exile that followed—all of it meted out by God to punish the Jews for their sins. The work is traditionally attributed to the prophet Jeremiah, but historians now believe that it was the work of at least four different authors.

Structure of Book: Chapters 1 through 4 are alphabetical acrostics—the first word of each verse beginning with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet in sequence. Chapter 5 is not an acrostic, but contains 22 lines, the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet. Acrostics have been a favorite style in Jewish liturgical poetry down through the ages, depicting the fullness of the subject, like the completeness of God’s love or, in this case, the A to Z of our people’s utter desolation.

Structure In Service: This is the approach to *Aycha* in this service: We will chant the Hebrew and read the English translation of the first three and last three verses of *Aycha*’s five chapters, but abridge the intermediate text in English. Between the chapters, we include brief narratives of four subsequent catastrophes in the long sad history of the Jewish people: the Crusades of the Middle Ages, the expulsion from Spain in the 15th Century, the Russian pogroms in the early 20th Century, and the Holocaust. After the first three readings, we will sing songs long associated with Tisha B’Av. Despite the centuries that separate these horrors and their distance in time and space from 586 BCE, the parallels often are stark. Together they take us on a 2 millennium journey through a long and winding tunnel of darkness.

הַשִּׁיבֵנוּ, יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְנָשׁוּבָה, †

חַדֵּשׁ יָמֵינוּ כְּקִדְמָם.

*Ha-shi-vei-nu, A-do-nai, ei-le-cha ve-na-shu-va,
cha-deish, cha-deish ya-mei-nu,
cha-deish ya-mei-nu ke-ke-dem.*

Take us back, O Lord, to Yourself,
And let us come back;
Renew our days as of old!

Blessings before reading from the Scroll of Lamentations

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂנוּ אֲסִירֵי-תְקוּהָ.

Ba-ruch a-ta, A-do-nai E-lo-hei-nu, me-lech ha-o-lam, a-sher a-sa-nu a-si-rei tik-vah.

We praise You, O God, Sovereign of existence, who has made us captives of Hope.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוְּנוּ עַל מִקְרָא מְגִלָּה.

Ba-ruch a-ta, A-do-nai E-lo-hei-nu, me-lech ha-o-lam, a-sher ki-de-sha-nu be-mits-vo-tav ve-tsi-va-nu al mik-ra me-gi-la.

[CHAPTER ONE depicts Jerusalem as a fallen woman who, as a result of her sins, sits lonely and ashamed, abandoned by all her lovers, stripped of all she holds dear.]

א^א אֵיכָה | יֹשְׁבָה בְדָר הָעִיר רַבַּתִּי עָם
הִיְתָה כְּאֵלְמָנָה
רַבַּתִּי בְּגוֹיִם שָׂרְתִי בְּמַדִּינֹת
הִיְתָה לְמָס:
ב^ב כָּכֹו תִבְכֶּה בְּלֵילָה וְדַמְעָתָהּ עַל לֶחֶץ
אֵין-לָהּ מִנְחָם מִכָּל-אֲהָבֶיהָ
כָּל-רַעִיָּהּ בְּגָדוּ בָּהּ
הָיוּ לָהּ לְאֵיבִים:
ג^ג גִּלְתָּהּ יְהוּדָה מֵעַנִּי וּמֵרַב עֲבֹדָהּ
הִיא יֹשְׁבָה בְּגוֹיִם
לֹא מִצָּאָה מְנוּחַם
כָּל-רֹדְפֶיהָ הִשִּׁיגוּהָ בֵּין הַמְּצָרִים:

[#7A] ¹Alas!
Lonely sits the city
Once great with people!
She that was great among nations
Is become like a widow;
The princess among states
Is become a thrall.

²Bitterly she weeps in the night,
Her cheek wet with tears.
There is none to comfort her
Of all her friends.
All her allies have betrayed her;
They have become her foes.

³Judah has gone into exile
Because of misery and harsh oppression;
When she settled among the nations,
She found no rest;
All her pursuers overtook her
In the narrow places.

[#7B] *[abridgement of verses 4-19:]*

The city is devastated, violated, and empty;
Her roads deserted;
Her remaining inhabitants searching for bread, bartering their treasures for a
bit of food;

Her heroes rejected by God;
Her young men crushed;
Her maidens and youth gone into captivity.

“Outside the sword deals death; indoors, the plague.”
All because of Jerusalem’s offenses to God,
She has become a mockery, disgraced, unclean.

“The Lord sent a fire down into my bones,” she laments.
“He has left me forlorn in constant misery....My eyes flow with tears,
Far from me is any comforter...for the foe has prevailed.”

To passers-by she says, “May it never befall you.”
But as her foes exult at her misfortune, she rages to God,

[#8A] ^{כ/20} See, O Lord, the distress I am in!

My heart is in anguish,
I know how wrong I was
To disobey.
Outside the sword deals death;
Indoors, the plague.

^{כא/21} When they heard how I was sighing,
There was none to comfort me;
All my foes heard of my plight and exulted.
For it is Your doing:
You have brought on the day that You threatened.
Oh, let them become like me!

^{כב/22} Let all their wrongdoing come before You,
And deal with them
As you have dealt with me
For all my transgressions.
For my sighs are many,
And my heart is sick.

יִרְאֵה יְהוָה כִּי־צָר־לִי מֵעַי חָמַר מָרוֹ
נָהַפֵּךְ לִבִּי בְקִרְבִּי
כִּי מָרוּ מְרִיתִי
מִחוּץ שְׂכָל־הַחַרֵב בְּבַיִת כְּמִוְתֵי:
כֹּא שָׁמְעוּ כִּי נֶאֱנַחָה אָנִי אֵין מְנַחֵם לִי
כָּל־אֵיבֵי שָׁמְעוּ רַעְתִּי שָׁשׂוּ
כִּי אַתָּה עָשִׂיתָ
הִבֵּאתָ יוֹם־קָרְאתָ וַיְהִי כְּמִנִּי:
כִּי תָבֹא כָּל־רַעְתָּם לְפָנָי וְעוֹלָל לָמוֹ
כַּאֲשֶׁר עוֹלָלָתָ לִי עַל כָּל־פְּשָׁעֵי
כִּי־רַבּוֹת אֲנַחְתִּי וְלִבִּי דָגִי:

[The Crusades:]

[#9]

In 1096, Pope Urban II called for a Crusade against the Muslims in the Holy Land. But the Crusaders couldn't wait until they got there, so they attacked the Jews along the way. As they followed the route along the Rhine and Danube river, they incited huge angry mobs to rise up against Jews--despite general opposition from bishops and prominent nobles, the recipients of financial support from the Jewish community.

The slaughter was bloody and widespread. Thousands of Jews were murdered in Rouen, Worms, Mainz, Regensburg, Metz, Prague and other centers of medieval Jewish life. When the Crusaders eventually arrived in Jerusalem, they captured the city and continued their bloody massacre. The Jews tried to defend their quarter of the city by barricading themselves in the synagogues. But the Crusaders either burnt them to death or sold them into slavery.

This was the first Crusade. It set the pattern for the seven that followed over the next 200 years. It was during a later Crusade that the infamous blood libel was born--the lie that Jews had to sacrifice a Christian to get blood for Jewish rituals--and spread with the Crusaders. In Blois, France, in 1171, as a result of the blood libel, all of the Jews were burnt at the stake.

Al na-ha-rot Ba-vel, על נהרות בבל, ♪
sham ya-shav-nu gam ba-chi-nu, שם ישבנו גם בכינו,
be-zoch-rei-nu et Tsi-yon. בזכרנו את ציון.

By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat, sat and wept, as we thought of Zion.

(From Psalm 137; continuation shown below--)

There on the poplars we hung up our lyres, for our captors asked us there for songs,
Our tormentors, for amusement, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion."
How can we sing a song of the Lord on alien soil?

If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand wither,
let my tongue stick to my palate if I cease to think of you,
If I do not keep Jerusalem in memory even at my happiest hour.

Remember, O Lord, against the Edomites the day of Jerusalem's fall;
How they cried, "Strip her, strip her to her very foundations!"

Fair Babylon, you predator,
A blessing on him who repays you in kind what you have inflicted on us;
A blessing on him who seizes your babies and dashes them against the rocks!

[CHAPTER TWO describes the physical destruction of Judah and the plight of its people that God wrought because of the people's sins.]

ב אַיִכָּה יַעֲיִב בְּאַפּוֹ | אֲדַנִּי אֶת-בֵּית-צִיּוֹן
הַשְּׁלִיךְ מִשָּׁמַיִם אֶרֶץ
תְּפֹאֶרֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל
וְלֹא-זָכַר הַדָּם-רַגְלָיו בְּיוֹם אַפּוֹ:
יִבְלַע אֲדֹנָי וְלֹא-חָמַל אֶת כָּל-נְאוֹת יַעֲקֹב
הַרְס בְּעִבְרָתוֹ מִבְּצֻרֵי בֵּית-יְהוּדָה הַגִּיעַ לְאֶרֶץ
חֵלָל מִמְּלָכָה וְשָׁרִיָּה:
יִגְדַע בְּחַרְי-אֵף כָּל קֶרֶן יִשְׂרָאֵל
הִשְׁיֵב אַחֲזֹר יְמִינוֹ מִפְּנֵי אוֹיֵב
וַיִּבְעַר בְּיַעֲקֹב כַּאֲשֶׁר לָהֶכָּה
אֲכָלָה סָבִיב:

[#10]

ב/2 ^{א/1} Alas!

The Lord in His wrath
Has shamed Fair Zion,
Has cast down from heaven to earth
The majesty of Israel.
He did not remember His Footstool [the Temple]
On His day of wrath.

ב/2 The Lord has laid waste without pity

All the habitations of Jacob;

He has razed in His anger

Fair Judah's strongholds.

He has brought low in dishonor

The kingdom and its leaders.

ג/3 In blazing anger He has cut down

All the might of Israel;

He has withdrawn His right hand

In the presence of the foe;

He has ravaged Jacob like flaming fire,

Consuming on all sides.

[abridgment of verses 4-19:]

[#11A]

God poured out His wrath like fire on Zion.
He slew all who delighted the eye,
Destroyed the strongholds,
Laid waste the land,
Stripped the Temple and
Destroyed His Tabernacle.

As a result, the king and leaders are in exile,
The elders sit silently in sackcloth,
Their heads covered with dust.

Babes and sucklings languish,
Dying in their mothers' bosoms.

All who pass by ridicule Jerusalem;
Her enemies jeer at her.

[#11B]

^{כ/20} See, O Lord, and behold,
To whom You have done this!
Alas, women eat their own fruit,
Their new-born babes!
Alas, priest and prophet are slain
In the Sanctuary of the Lord!

^{כא/21} Prostrate in the streets lie
Both young and old.
My maidens and youths
Are fallen by the sword;
You slew them on Your day of wrath,
You slaughtered without pity.

^{כב/22} You summoned, as on a festival,
My neighbors from roundabout.
On the day of the wrath of the Lord,
None survived or escaped;
Those whom I bore and reared
My foe has consumed.

יִרְאֶה יְהוָה וְהִבִּיטָהּ
 לְמִי עוֹלָלָתָ בָּהּ
 אִם־תֵּאֱכָלְנָה נְשִׁים פְּרִי־עֵלְלֵי טַפָּחִים
 אִם־יִהְרֶג בְּמִקְדָּשׁ אֲדֹנָי כִּהְנֶן וְנָכִיא:
 אֲשַׁכְּבוּ לְאֶרֶץ חוּצוֹת נְעַר וְזָקֵן
 בְּתוֹלְתֵי וּבְחוּרֵי גַפְלֹו בְּחָרֵב
 הִרְגָתָ בְּיוֹם אֶפְרָיִם
 טַבְּחָתָ לֹא חָמְלָתָ:
 בְּתִקְרָא בְּיוֹם מוֹעֵד מְגוּרֵי מִסְכִּיב
 וְלֹא הָיָה בְּיוֹם אֶף־יְהוָה פָּלִיט וְשָׂרִיר
 אֲשֶׁר־טַפְּחָתִי וְרַבִּיתִי אֵיבִי כֻלָּם:

[Expulsion from Spain:]

[#12-]

With the marriage of Ferdinand II of Aragon and Isabella I of Castile, a united Spain undertook an Inquisition in 1478, to root out the secret Jews who had converted to Christianity but continued to practice Judaism behind closed doors.

A poem by Rabbi Ruth Adar of San Francisco describes the impact on the Jews of Spain and Portugal:

"The monarchs of Spain and King of Portugal offered them a choice:
 Convert, go to exile, or die.
 Many fled, some were converted by force.

Many remained secretly faithful to Torah.
 Too many of them suffered at the hands of the Inquisition,
 Burnt to death in the auto-da-fe:

[#-13]

*Thus were the great congregations of Sepharad destroyed:
In Seville, in Cordoba, in Cadiz, in Barcelona,
In Granada, in Malaga, and in Toledo
Jewish prayers and Jewish voices were heard no more.*

*The civilization that produced great poetry and science, philosophy
and medicine
scattered to the four corners of the earth,
driven underground, and burnt to death in city centers.
Their neighbors denounced them, and crowds cheered for their
blood.
No voice rose to speak for them, none came to their aid.'*

Not content with the results of the Inquisition, Ferdinand and
Isabella--ironically on Tisha B'Av--in 1492, gave the Jews four
months to convert or leave.

אֵלֵי צִיּוֹן וְעָרֶיהָ כְּמוֹ אִשָּׁה בְּצִיּוֹרָהּ †
וְכִבְתוּלָה חֲגוּרַת־שָׂק עַל בְּעַל נְעוּרֶיהָ.

[*Eli Tsiyon v'areha, k'mo isha b'tzireha
V'chivtulah chagurat sak, al ba'al n'ureha.*]

Mount Zion and her cities, are like a woman in her birth pains,
And like a maiden wrapped in sack-cloth for the husband of her youth.
(excerpt from acrostic poem/kina of Tisha B'Av; author unknown)

[CHAPTER THREE is a personal lament by a man who describes the terrible impact of the destruction on him, which he attributes to God. But he also recalls God's kindness, which gives him hope. This chapter is chanted with a different, special trope that reflects the 3 verse, 2-line acrostic structure.]

ג אֲנִי הַגֵּבֶר רָאָה עָנִי
בְּשֶׁבֶט עֶבְרָתוֹ:
ב אֹתִי נָתַג וַיִּלֶּךְ חֹשֶׁךְ וְלֹא-אֹר:
ג אֶתְּכֵי בִי יִשָּׁב יַהֲפֹךְ יָדוֹ כָּל-הַיּוֹם:
ד בָּלָה בְּשָׂרִי וְעוֹרִי
ה שָׁבַר עֲצָמוֹתַי:
ו בָּנָה עָלַי וַיִּקַּף רֹאשׁ וַתִּלְאַה:
ז בְּמַחְשָׁבִים הוֹשִׁיבָנִי כְּמַתִּי עוֹלָם:
ח גָּדַר בְּעַדִּי וְלֹא אֶצְאָה כְּבָיִד נְחֹשֶׁתַי:
ט גָּם כִּי אֶזְעַק נֹאֲשָׁוַע
י שָׁתַם תְּפִלָּתִי:
יא גָּדַר דָּרְכֵי בְּגֹזִית
יב נְתִיבַתִּי עֲוֹה:

[#14-]

ג א¹ I am the man who has known affliction
Under the rod of His wrath;
ב² Me He drove on and on
In unrelieved darkness;
ג³ On none but me He brings down His hand
Again and again, without cease.

ד⁴ He has worn away my flesh and skin;
He has shattered my bones.

ה⁵ All around me He has built
Misery and hardship;

ו⁶ He has made me dwell in darkness,
Like those long dead.

[#-15A] ^{v/7} He has walled me in and I cannot break out;
He has weighed me down with chains.
^{π/8} And when I cry and plead,
He shuts out my prayer;
^{υ/9} He has walled in my ways with hewn blocks,
He has made my paths a maze.

[abridgement of verses 10-57:]

[#15B] God is a lurking bear, a lion in hiding.
He has shot into my vitals, has mangled me.
He has broken my teeth and ground me into the ground.

I have become a laughingstock to all people, the butt of their jibes.
I am filled with bitterness.
But I do recall that the Lord's kindness has not ended,
His mercies not spent, and thus I have hope.

The Lord is good to those who trust in Him, so it is good to wait patiently.
Let us search and examine our ways, and turn back to the Lord.
We have transgressed and rebelled and so God has clothed Himself in anger.
I call on You from the Pit--hear my plea; do not shut Your ear.

[#15C-] ^{πj/58} You championed my cause, O Lord,
You have redeemed my life.
^{υj/59} You have seen, O Lord, the wrong done me;
Oh, vindicate my right!
^{ο/60} You have seen all their malice,
All their designs against me;

^{κδ/61} You have heard, O Lord, their taunts,
All their designs against me,
^{κδ/62} The mouthings and pratings of my adversaries,
Against me all day long.
^{κδ/63} See how, at their ease or at work,
I am the butt of their gibes.

[#-16]

^{טד/64} Give them, O Lord, their deserts

According to their deeds.

^{טה/65} Give them anguish of heart;

Your curse be upon them!

^{יט/66} Oh, pursue them in wrath and destroy them

From under the heavens of the Lord!

^גרַבַּת אֲדוֹנָי רִיבֵי נַפְשֵׁי גְאֹלְתֵי חַיִּי:

^טרְאִיתָהּ יְהוָה עֲגַתִּי

שִׁפְטָהּ מִשִּׁפְטֵי:

^סרְאִיתָהּ כָּל-גְּקֻמָּתָם

כָּל-מַחְשַׁבְתָּם לִי:

^אשָׁמַעְתָּ חֲרָפָתָם יְהוָה

כָּל-מַחְשַׁבְתָּם עָלַי:

^בשִׁפְטֵי קָמִי וְהַגִּיזוֹם

עָלַי כָּל-הַיּוֹם:

^גשִׁבְתָּם וְקִימָתָם הַבֵּיטָה

אֲנִי מִנְּגִינָתָם:

^דתָּשִׁיב לָהֶם גְּמוּלַת יְהוָה כְּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵיהֶם:

^התִּתֵּן לָהֶם מְגִנַת-לֵב

תִּאֲלָתֶךָ לָהֶם:

^ותִּרְדֹּף בְּאַף וְתִשְׁמַדֵּם

מִתַּחַת שָׁמַיִם יְהוָה:

[Pogroms:]

[#17]

Lamentations is filled with the vivid and brutal images of Babylonian violence against Jews 2,500 years ago. A more recent Hebrew poet, Chayim Nachman Bialek, in his epic poem about the four-day pogrom in Kishinev in April 1903, described horrors equally the stuff of nightmares.

Kishinev, then the capital of Bessarabia (now Moldova) had a population of 125,000, half of them Jewish. Forty-nine Jews died in the first wave of violence, many Jewish women were raped, and 1,500 Jewish dwellings damaged.

Here is a brief excerpt from Bialek's poem, "The City of Slaughter."

Arise and go now to the city of slaughter;
Into its courtyard wind thy way;
There with thine own hand touch, and with the eyes of thine
head,
Behold on tree, on stone, on fence, on mural clay,
The spattered blood and dried brains of the dead....

Descend then, to the cellars of the town
There where the virginal daughters of thy folk were fouled,
Where seven heathen flung a woman down,
The daughter in the presence of her mother,
The mother in the presence of her daughter,
Before slaughter, during slaughter, and after slaughter!....

Brief-weary and forespent, a dark Shekinah
Runs to each nook and cannot find its rest;
Wishes to weep, but weeping does not come;
Would roar; is dumb.
Its head beneath its wing, its wing outspread
Over the shadows of the martyr'd dead,
Its tears in dimness and in silence shed....

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת. ♪

בְּשׁוּב יְיָ אֶת־שִׁיבַת צִיּוֹן הִיָּנּוּ כַּח לְמִים.
אֲזַיִּמְלֵא שְׂחֹק פִּינּוּ, וּלְשׁוֹנֵנוּ רִנָּה.
אֲזַיִּאמְרוּ בַּגּוֹיִם: הִגְדִּיל יְיָ לַעֲשׂוֹת עִם־אֱלֹהֵי.
הִגְדִּיל יְיָ לַעֲשׂוֹת עִמָּנוּ, הִיָּנּוּ שְׂמֵחִים.
הַלּוֹךְ יִלֵּךְ וּבָכָה נִשְׂא מִשָּׁךְ־הַזֶּרַע,
בֹּא־יָבֹא בְרִנָּה, נִשְׂא אֶל־מִתְיוֹ.

When the Lord restores the fortunes of Zion--we see it as in a dream--
Our mouths shall be filled with laughter, our tongues, with songs of joy.
Then shall they say among the nations, "The Lord has done great things for
them!"

The Lord will do great things for us and we shall rejoice.

Restore our fortunes, O Lord, like water courses in the Negeb.
They who sow in tears shall reap with songs of joy.
Though he goes along weeping, carrying the seed-bag
He shall come back with songs of joy, carrying his sheaves.

(Psalm 126)

[CHAPTER FOUR is a further description of the siege of Jerusalem and contrasts the former grandeur with the wretched present, succeeded by a communal lament.]

ד אֵיכָה יוֹעַם זָהָב
יִשְׁנֵא הַכֶּתֶם הַטּוֹב
תִּשְׁתַּפְּכֶנָּה אֲבָנֵי-קֶרֶשׁ
בְּרֵאשׁ כָּל-חוּצוֹת:
בְּנֵי צִיּוֹן הַיְקָרִים
הַמְּסֻלָּאִים בְּפֹז
אֵיכָה נִחְשְׁבוּ לְנִבְלֵי-חֶרֶשׁ
מַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵי יוֹצֵר:
גַּם-תַּנִּים* חָלְצוּ שָׂר
הִנִּיקוּ גֹרִיהֶן
בַּת-עַמִּי לְאֶבֶן
בְּיַעֲנִים* בְּמִדְבָּר:

[#19]

ד ^{n/1} Alas!

The gold is dulled,
Debated the finest gold!
The sacred gems are spilled
At every street corner.

^{b/2} The precious children of Zion;
Once valued as gold--
Alas, they are accounted as earthen pots,
Work of a potter's hands!

^{v/3} Even jackals offer the breast
And suckle their young;
But my poor people has turned cruel,
Like ostriches of the desert.

[abridgement of verses 4-19:]

[#20A]

The people are famished;
The previously pure white elect--their faces are black and they are but skin and bones.

Better off to have been slain by the sword than slain by famine;
Women have even cooked their own children.

No king or inhabitants could have believed the scope of destruction--
All because of the sins of our prophets and the iniquities of our priests.
Our days are done, our doom has come.

Our enemies are swifter than eagles,
Chased us in the mountains, and
Lie in wait for us in the wilderness.

[#20B]

^{כ/20} The breath of our life, the Lord's anointed,
Was captured in their traps--
He in whose shade we had thought
To live among the nations.

^{כח/21} Rejoice and exult, Fair Edom,
Who dwell in the land of Uz!
To you, too, the cup shall pass,
You shall get drunk and expose your nakedness.

^{כב/22} Your iniquity, Fair Zion, is expiated;
He will exile you no longer.
Your iniquity, Fair Edom, He will note;
He will uncover your sins.

כִּירוּחַ אֲפִינוּ מְשִׁיחַ יְהוָה
נִלְכַד בְּשַׁחֲתוֹתֵם
אֲשֶׁר אָמַרְנוּ

בְּצִלוֹ נִחֵיהַ בְּגוֹיִם:
כא שִׁישֵׁי וְשִׁמְחֵי בֵּת-אֱלֹהִים
יִושְׁבֵּת * בְּאֶרֶץ עֹיֵץ
גַּם-עֲלֵיךָ תִּעְבְּר-כּוֹס
תִּשְׁכְּרֵי וְתִתְעַרְי:
כב תַּם-עֹנֶיךָ בֵּת-צִיּוֹן
לֹא יוֹסִיף לְהַגְלוֹתְךָ
פָּקַד עֹנֶיךָ בֵּת-אֱלֹהִים
גָּלָה עַל-חַטָּאתֶיךָ:

[Holocaust:]

[#21]

In "A Plea for the Dead," Elie Wiesel compares the plight of Jews in the Holocaust with those in the Middle Ages: "During the Middle Ages, the Jews, when they chose death, were convinced that by their sacrifice they were glorifying and sanctifying God's name. At Auschwitz, the sacrifices were without point, without faith, without divine inspiration...."

"It was worse than the Middle Ages," he goes on. "Then, driven from Spain, the Jews were welcomed in Holland. Persecuted in one country, they were invited to another... But during the Hitler era the conspiracy against them seemed universal. The English closed off the gates of Palestine, the Swiss accepted only the rich... and children... while the poor and the adult, their right to life denied, were driven back into darkness."

....

"Never had the Jewish people been so alone," he writes. "They alone did not receive help or encouragement; neither arms nor messages were sent them; they were not spoken to, no one was concerned with them; they did not exist. They cried for help, but the appeals they issued by radio or by mail fell on deaf ears...."

[#22]

In an earlier, more personal book, *Night*, Wiesel writes about his experiences as a 16-year-old while tending to his dying father in the Buchenwald concentration camp:

"This is your father isn't it?" asked the head of the block.

"Yes. He's very ill." ...

"Listen to me, boy. Don't forget that you're in a concentration camp. Here, every man has to fight for himself and not think of anyone else. Even of his father. Here, there are no fathers, no brothers, no friends. Everyone lives and dies for himself alone. I'll give you a sound piece of advice—don't give your ration of bread and soup to your old father. There's nothing you can do for him...."

I listened to him without interrupting. He was right, I thought.....Only a fraction of a second, but I felt guilty. I ran to find a little soup to give my father...but all he wanted was water.

"My son, some water...I'm burning...My stomach...."

"Quiet over there!" yelled the officer.

The officer came up to him and shouted to him to be quiet. But my father did not hear him. He went on calling me. The officer dealt him a violent blow on the head with his truncheon.

I did not move. I was afraid. My body was afraid of also receiving a blow.

Then my father made a rattling noise and it was my name:

"Eliezer." Then I had to go to bed.

I climbed into my bunk above my father, who was still alive. It was January 28, 1945.

I awoke on January 29 at dawn. In my father's place lay another invalid. They must have taken him away before dawn....

There were no prayers at his grave. No candles were lit to his memory. His last word was my name....

I did not weep...I could not weep....But...in the recesses of my weakened conscience, could I have searched it, I might perhaps have found something like—free at last!

אני מאמין Ani Ma'amin

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Ani ma'amin b'emunah sh'leimah b'viat
hamashiach, v'af al pi sh'yitnameah, im
kol zeh achakeh lo b'chol yom sheyavo.

אני מאמין באמונה שלמה בביאת המשיח, ואף
על פי שיתמהמה, עם כל זה אחכה לו בכל יום
שיבוא.

Translation:

I believe with perfect faith in the coming of the Messiah, and, though he tarry, I will wait daily for his coming.

[CHAPTER FIVE completes the communal recounting of the suffering, ending with a final plea to God in response to our dire circumstance of having been rejected by Him.]

ה^א זְכוֹר יְהוָה מָה־הָיָה לָנוּ
הַבִּיטָה * וּרְאֵה אֶת־חַרְפֹּתֵנוּ:
ב^ב נֶחֱלַתְנוּ נְהַפְכָה לְזָרִים
בְּתֵינוּ לְנֹכְרִים:
ג^ג יְתוּמִים הָיִינוּ וְאֵין * אָב
אִמֵּנוּ כְּאִלְמָנוֹת:

[#23] ה^{א/1} Remember, O Lord, what has befallen us;
Behold, and see our disgrace!

ב^{ב/2} Our heritage has passed to aliens,
Our homes to strangers.

ג^{ג/3} We have become orphans, fatherless;
Our mothers are like widows.

[abridgement of verses 4 to 19:]

[#24A]

We no longer have water, or kindling for fire.
We reach out to Egypt and Assyria, but no one responds.
We bear the guilt of our fathers.

The enemy has ravaged our maidens,
Hanged our princes, and
Shown no respect to our elders.

Gone is any joy and dancing because of our sins.
Jackals now prowl on desolate Mount Zion.
But You, O Lord, are enthroned forever and endure through all ages.

[#24B]

^{כ/20} Why have you forgotten us utterly,
Forsaken us for all time?

^{כא/21} Take us back, O Lord, to Yourself,
And let us come back;
Renew our days as of old!

^{כב/22} For truly, You have rejected us,
Bitterly rages against us.

Take us back, O Lord, to Yourself,
And let us come back;
Renew our days as of old!

כ לָמָּה לְנִצַּחַת תִּשְׁכַּחֵנוּ
תִּעֲזֹבֵנוּ לְאַרְרֵי יָמִים:
כא הֲשִׁיבֵנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְנִשׁוּבָה*
חַדֵּשׁ יָמֵינוּ כְּקֶדֶם:
כב כִּי אִם־מֵאִס מֵאִסְתָּנוּ
קִצַּפְתָּ עָלֵינוּ עַד־מְאֹד:

נַחֵם, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, אֶת אַבְלֵי צִיּוֹן וְאֶת אַבְלֵי יְרוּשָׁלַיִם,
הָעִיר אֲשֶׁר בָּלְעוּ לְגִיּוֹנוֹת

וַיִּרְשׁוּהָ עוֹבְדֵי פְסִילִים
וַיִּטְּלוּ אֶת עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל לְחָרֵב,
וַיַּהַרְגוּ בְּזֶדוֹן חֲסִידֵי עֲלִיוֹן.
כִּי בָאֵשׁ הִצַּתָּהּ, וּבָאֵשׁ אַתָּה עֲתִיד לְבְנוֹתָהּ.
כְּאָמֹר: וַאֲנִי אֶהְיֶה לָּהּ, נְאֻם יְיָ,
חֹמַת אֵשׁ סָבִיב,
וּלְכָבוֹד אֶהְיֶה בְּתוֹכָהּ.

כְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ, מְנַחֵם צִיּוֹן וּבּוֹנֵה יְרוּשָׁלַיִם.

*Na-cheim, A-do-nai E-lo-hei-nu, et a-vei-lei Tsi-yon ve-et a-vei-lei
Ye-ru-sha-la-yim, ha-ir a-sheer ba-le-u lig-yo-not va-yi-ra-shu-ha
o-ve-dei pe-si-lim, va-ya-ti-lu et a-me-cha Yis-ra-eil le-cha-rev, va-
ya-har-gu be-za-don cha-si-dei el-yon. Ki ba-eish hi-tsa-tah u-va-
eish a-ta a-tid liv-no-tah. Ka-a-mur: va-ani eh-yeh lah, ne-um
A-do-nai, cho-mat eish sa-viv, u-le-cha-vod eh-yeh be-to-chah.*

*Ba-ruch a-ta, A-do-nai, me-na-cheim Tsi-yon u-vo-nei Ye-ru-sha-
la-yim.*

Comfort, O God, the mourners of Zion, the mourners of Jerusalem.

Legions devoured her;

idolators took possession of her;

they put Thy people Israel to the sword

and wantonly slaughtered the faithful servants of God Most High.

With fire was Zion destroyed,

but with fire wilt Thou, O God, rebuild her;

as it is said: "I will be to her," says God,

"a wall of fire round about,

and for as it is glory I will be in the midst of her."

We praise You, O God, who comforts Zion and is rebuilding Jerusalem.

*Renew our days as of old,
and we shall return unto Thee, O God.*

הַשִּׁיבֵנוּ, יְיָ, אֵלֵינוּ וְנִשְׁוֶבָה,
חַדֵּשׁ יָמֵינוּ כְּקֵדָם.

*Ha-shi-vei-nu, A-do-nai, ei-le-cha ve-na-shu-va,
cha-deish; cha-deish ya-mei-nu,
cha-deish ya-mei-nu ke-ke-dem.*

[#26A] We conclude this service on a note of hope despite a history of recurring despair—even in these times of angry rhetoric, short tempers and dispiriting ill-will, both in our country and in Israel. In the words of Israeli poet Yehuda Amichai:

In Jerusalem, hope springs eternal. Hope is like a faithful dog.
Sometimes she runs ahead of me to check out the future, to sniff it out,
And then I call her: Hope, Hope, come here, and she
Comes to me. I pet her, she eats out of my hand.
And sometimes she stays behind, near some other hope.
Maybe to sniff out whatever was. Then I call her my Despair,
I call out to her: Hey, my little Despair, come here,
And she comes and snuggles up, and again
I call her Hope.

(Amichai, *Open Closed Open, Jerusalem stanza #16*)

[#26B-] We recognize the lessons of our history: that out of the ashes of destruction are created exciting new ideas, giant leaps of progress, and the fulfillment of long-treasured dreams. As we recall this evening--

--From the destruction by Rome of Jerusalem and its Temple, the end of our sacrificial system, and our exile in Babylon came a new, rabbinic Judaism centered on prayer in the synagogue and rituals in the home.

--From the devastation of the Crusades, came a new urbanization and sophistication as we moved to the cities for protection; and also came a renewed Jewish presence in Palestine as many, especially rabbis, traveled the Crusader routes to the Holy Land.

[#-27A] --From the expulsion from Spain came the beginning of our integration into the renaissance of Northern Europe and our presence in the Western Hemisphere.
--From the pogroms of Russia came our massive immigration to America and the revival of the Zionist dream.
--And from the Holocaust came the fulfillment of that ancient dream--the restoration of our homeland with the establishment of the State of Israel.

[#27B] Further, Lamentations and Tisha B'av both incorporate and end on a note of hope:

The *Hashivenu* we just heard asks for our return and renewal, suggesting the cycle of history as well as life, from good to bad and back to good.

Even the letters in the Hebrew words point to this cycle and form an acrostic of life: From the א / *Aleph* [the first letter of Hebrew alphabet] in *Aycha*, for despair, to the ת / *Tav* [the last letter of Hebrew alphabet] in *Tikva*, for hope.

The phrase Tisha B'av itself spells a reverse acrostic from ת ש *Tav-Shin* [last two letters in Hebrew alphabet] to ב א *Bet-Aleph* [first two letters in Hebrew alphabet]: That is from the end back to the beginning, a new start--

From *Tav*: both *Torah* and *Tohu* [emptiness in Genesis]
To *Aleph*: both *Elohim* [God] and *Echad* [one].

Also, is it a coincidence that Tisha B'av and *teshuva* (the Hebrew word for repentance or return) share the same letters--rearranged to continue the cyclical metaphor?

[#27C] Anyone who has been in Israel in May for *Yom Hazikaron* (Israeli Memorial Day) and *Yom Haatzmaut* (Independence Day) experiences an even more dramatic illustration of this cycle so integral to Judaism. In the space of 24 hours, the nation goes from the deepest mourning--literally everything stops for a minute, even cars on the highway, while sirens sound throughout the land--to the wildest celebration with street parties, loud rejoicing, lots of food and drink. From deepest mourning to deepest joy. Living life to its fullest.

[#28] Before we extinguish our candles--the lights that illuminate this somber gathering--and leave our virtual sanctuary in silence, let's remember how we converted challenges to opportunities and moved from "lost" to "found":

- By rediscovering the eternal and abiding truths of our heritage
- By not forsaking the faith of our ancestors in these truths
- By walking through fear and embracing change
- By trusting in our own resilience in the face of adversity, and
- By coming together as a community, especially in times of need.

[Sung to the melody of *Hatikva*.]

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת. ♪

בְּשׁוּב יְיָ אֶת־שִׁיבַת צִיּוֹן הִיָּינוּ כָּח לְמִים.
אֲזַי מְלֵא שְׂחֹק פִּינוּ, וְלִשְׁוֹנְנוּ רָנָה.
אֲזַי אִמְרוּ בְּגוֹיִם: הִגְדִּיל יְיָ לַעֲשׂוֹת עִם־אֶלֶּה.
הִגְדִּיל יְיָ לַעֲשׂוֹת עִמָּנוּ, הִיָּינוּ שְׂמֵחִים.
הַלּוֹף יֵלֶךְ וּבָכָה נִשְׂא מְשֶׁךְ־הַזָּרַע,
בְּא־יָבֵא בְּרָנָה, נִשְׂא אֶל־מִתְיוּ.

[*Hatikvah*; the Hope]

Kol 'od balevav penimah	כָּל עוֹד בַּלֶּבֶב פְּנִימָה
Nefesh Yehudi homiyah,	נֶפֶשׁ יְהוּדֵי הוֹמִיָּה,
Ulfate mizrach kadimah,	וּלְפָאֵתִי מִזְרַח קַדִּימָה,
'Ayin leTziyon tzofiyah;	עַיִן לְצִיּוֹן צוֹפִיָּה;
'Od lo avdah tikvatenu,	עוֹד לֹא אֶבְדָּה תִקְוַתֵּנוּ,
Hatikvah bat shnot	הַתִּקְוָה בַּת שָׁנוֹת
'alpayim,	אֶלְפַיִם.
Lihyot 'am chofshi	לִהְיוֹת עַם חֻפְשִׁי
be'artzenu,	בְּאֶרְצֵנוּ,
'Eretz-Tziyon virushalayim.	אֶרֶץ צִיּוֹן וִירוּשָׁלַיִם.

As long as in the heart, within,
A Jewish soul still yearns,
And onward, towards the ends of the east
An eye still gazes toward Zion;

Our hope is not yet lost,
The hope two thousand years old,
To be a free nation in our land,
The land of Zion and Jerusalem.